

**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STEERING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 4, 2002
8:00 A.M.**

1. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m. Present were Chair Wayne Arnold, Vice-Chair Chuck Bonfiglio, Councilmember Truex (departed at 8:45 a.m.), Councilmember Starkey, Edna Moore, Jim Wachtstetter (arrived at 8:07 a.m.), and Lynn Goldman (departed at 8:40 a.m.). Also present was Committee Secretary Jenevia Edwards recording the meeting. Economic Development Manager Margaret Wu, Richard Abraham and Neal Kalis were absent.

2. OLD BUSINESS

2.1 Helping New Businesses to Succeed – Robert Ogonowski, First Western Bank

Mr. Ogonowski stated that he was the Chairperson of the Business Development Committee of the Davie/Cooper City Chamber of Commerce. He indicated that although the Chamber had a Membership Committee to enlist new members, as well as an Education Committee to interact with educational institutions in the area, the Business Development Committee focused on the education of its members. Mr. Ogonowski explained that it was the intent of the Chamber to provide a forum that allowed small business people to attend functions at the Chamber that would assist in their education both on a personal and business level. He indicated that seminars were scheduled for this year, however, some dates had not been confirmed. He added that on January 15th, an Internal Revenue Service representative would make a presentation on Tax Law Update and Resource Assistance for Businesses. Mr. Ogonowski commented that people did not understand the IRS and this was an opportunity that would prove beneficial to the community. He indicated that membership in the Chamber was not a requirement to attend the seminars, however, membership was encouraged.

Mr. Ogonowski referred to several other proposed seminars in April, July and October that were being sponsored by the Chamber and the topics that would be discussed. He indicated that some topics to be discussed were advertising, marketing and inexpensive ways to become well-known in the community, identification fraud, how individuals could prevent identification theft and how small business owner could educate its employees to effectively ward off identification fraud. Mr. Ogonowski commented that a panel forum was also planned with a financial consultant, an insurance consultant, and a banker. He added that the forum would be organized with four different areas of discussion with a question and answer portion. Mr. Ogonowski indicated that the schedule for these seminars would be available on the Chamber's website and he provided the address.

Chair Arnold referred to the incubator stage of small businesses, indicating that most did not survive after the first two years because there was no "seed money" available during difficulties. He inquired if there were any programs available in the area of training in a particular type of business to provide assistance to small businesses. Mr. Ogonowski advised that there had been a program established by the Chamber "The Checklist for Success" was intended to be a manual with instructions regarding the different facets of business; however, some of the telephone numbers had changed and most of the information was now available on the internet. Mr. Ogonowski commented that small businesses needing "seed money" could approach local banking institutions and discuss SBA lending, which was a loan program

**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STEERING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 4, 2002**

supported by the federal government to provide loan guarantees to banks at varying percentages. Mr. Ogonowski added that a bank that was reluctant to lend to a new business that had no proven track record, would receive support from the government. He added that he was unable to give specific information as to how the program worked. Mr. Ogonowski added that it was an encouragement to small business owners to seek SBA financing methods and this would also allow banks to become involved in the community.

Chair Arnold indicated that he hoped that all pertinent information would become available on the website for both the Town as well as Cooper City. He expressed the opinion that communication was lacking in the Town when it pertained to new businesses and it was a frightening experience for individuals who were afraid of the bureaucracy of some departments.

Ms. Goldman expressed her appreciation for the presentation and agreed with a lack of communication. She indicated that under Mr. Ogonowski's leadership, the committee had done an excellent job in organizing many seminars and added that she was concerned that the some Committee members were unaware of such seminars and programs. Ms. Goldman indicated that the website was an excellent resource of information and suggested that Council and the Committee should do a better job with publicity to make the community aware of the services that were available to them both in the Town and in Cooper City. She indicated that she had been invited to Workforce Twenty Twenty and added that the committee chair had no knowledge of Workforce Twenty Twenty.

Chair Arnold asked what Workforce Twenty Twenty was. Councilmember Starkey advised that this was a committee with the Broward Alliance that was responsible for identifying within the school system and other organizations, certain future thinking business that should come into the community and how to educate residents within those areas. Ms. Goldman added that there were other industries within the tri-county area that provided information on how to assist and encourage new businesses and providing employment opportunities through the Department of Labor. Chair Arnold indicated that it was helpful that the Chamber of Commerce was involved in the seminars and added that the Davie Merchants and Industrial Association would like to participate. He commented that the specific concern of the Committee was that there should be information available through the Town for someone who was starting a new business. Councilmember Starkey indicated that Economic Development Manager Margaret Wu would be able to provide information, not counseling, to new potential businesses regarding permits and occupational licenses. She added that the main focus of the EDC was to attract big businesses first; however, something would have to be done to retain small businesses. A lengthy discussion followed with Councilmember Starkey advising that the Development Services Department had a checklist available indicating the technical paperwork necessary for new and existing businesses.

Ms. Moore asked what was classified as a small business as many of the small businesses within the Town were owned by family and friends. She expressed the opinion that the Development Services Department was not interested in businesses of that nature. Ms. Moore added that the checklist was too lengthy and each new department director came with different ideas. She indicated that what was needed was for a staff member to "walk" new business

owners through the process instead of providing additional information which she believed

**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STEERING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 4, 2002**

was unnecessary. Ms. Moore commented that there was too much bureaucracy involved and this was discouraging to small business owners.

Mr. Ogonowski encouraged membership in Chamber which would provide interaction between small business owners.

Mr. Bonfiglio commented that his frustration with the Chamber was due to lack of communication both internal and external. He spoke of the Committee Chairmen meetings, a program that was instituted while he was chairman of the Chamber to have periodic meetings so that each committee was made aware of what the other was doing. Mr. Bonfiglio added that the problem was further compounded because the business community did not perceive the Chamber as an entity that could assist small businesses. He commented that that caused the rise of the downtown merchants and had the Chamber done an effective job, there would be no need for the DMIA. Mr. Bonfiglio advised that the information should be communicated to small businesses that if they needed assistance, they should contact the Davie/Cooper City Chamber of Commerce. Following discussion regarding the number of attendees at the seminars, Mr. Bonfiglio indicated that there had to be a way to inform the community of the Chamber's services. Mr. Ogonowski referred to a planning session held in December where the chair of each committee met to discuss the success and failure of their committee during the previous year. He indicated that the problem with communication was one of the issues discussed.

Mr. Wachtstetter commented that customer service and community relations appeared to be the biggest problems faced by most businesses. He added that the bureaucracy was intimidating.

Councilmember Starkey referred to the Wayne Huizenga School of Business and indicated that they offered classes in entrepreneurship and indicated that this could be a resource in partnering some of seminars offered by the Chamber. Mr. Ogonowski indicated that interaction was needed between the committees and he planned to present the idea to the education committee in order to place the seminar series through the school.

Councilmember Starkey commented that the Town was in the process of creating a new website and added that she would seek the approval of Council to have a link between the Chamber's and the Town's website as well as the website of other organizations within the Town. Discussion followed regarding the linkages proposed by the Town and the present linkages available through the Chamber and Broward County.

Ms. Moore inquired if businesses with home occupational licenses were eligible for membership with the Chamber and if these business owners could have a website to advertise their businesses. Mr. Ogonowski responded affirmatively.

Councilmember Starkey indicated that the Town was looking into current software and networking capabilities from various vendors. Mr. Ogonowski added that advertising was also available through the Chamber at an economical rate.

3. NEW BUSINESS

Councilmember Truex indicated that in his business, he saw many businesses that failed

and expressed the opinion that not everyone should be in business. He added that an idea was not enough to make a business successful.

**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STEERING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 4, 2002**

Councilmember Truex referred to Cost Recovery and indicated that he had concerns regarding one area; however, that needed to be “tweaked” and he did not want to hammer small businesses. He added that Councilmember Starkey and Town Attorney Monroe Kiar had been successful in addressing his concerns.

Councilmember Truex indicated that there was a large parcel of land close to the Turnpike which would be coming before Council to have the residential density changed to two houses per acre. He commented that this was brought before Council previously by the Economic Development Council for an employment center. Councilmember Truex added that he could not make a decision until that public hearing was heard; however, he thought the Committee might be interested because if houses were built, that would preclude anything else being built there.

3.1 Agrarian Committee

Mr. Wachtstetter advised that there was nothing to report as the Committee had not met.

3.2 Community Redevelopment Agency

Chair Arnold reported that signage was discussed by the Agency which resulted in the holiday signs along Davie Road. He added that these would be replaced with patriotic type signs which would remain in place unless there was a proposed special event taking place.

Chair Arnold referred to the Walgreens project and advised that it was still on hold. He added that the Town had requested that the architect make another presentation to Walgreens in the hope of discovering a mutual interest method to resolving the parking problems. Chair Arnold expressed the opinion that Walgreens would be a great asset to the community.

3.3 Davie/Cooper City Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Bonfiglio indicated that Mr. Ogonowski’s report had given all of the upcoming events of the Chamber and he had nothing else to add. He advised that attorney Brad Hartman would become the Chamber’s new president.

3.4 Davie Economic Development Council

As there was no representative present, no report was made.

3.5 Davie Merchants and Industrial Association

Chair Arnold reported that the Annual Installation Dinner of the DMIA would be held on January 15th at the Arrowhead Country Club. He added that Circuit Court Judge Renee Goldenberg would be installing the new officers.

3.6 Planning and Zoning Board

Ms. Moore referred to the property that was discussed by Councilmember Truex and inquired if this property was the same property that created so much controversy. A lengthy

discussion ensued with Councilmember Starkey commenting that the property was the old employment center which had become Poinciana.

**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STEERING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 4, 2002**

3.7 South Florida Education Center

Ms. Goldman was present earlier in the meeting; however, she departed at the end of Mr. Ogonowski's presentation.

3.8 Town Council

Councilmember Starkey reported that the Town was planning to develop a vacant property at Nob Hill and State Road 84. She indicated that there was a traffic problem in the area which involved the businesses within the area and this affected the school. Councilmember Starkey added that development in the area for businesses had increased and the school capacity had increased as well. As a result, businesses were suffering and the residents within the area were also affected by the traffic. She advised that two workshops were held with the school principals, the businesses and the developer who would be developing several acres within the area. Discussion followed with Councilmember Starkey indicating that she did not favor the proposed development which was warehouses; she would prefer an office park.

Councilmember Starkey indicated that the Town was doing a traffic study with hope of compiling the information and the data and to work with the Florida Department of Transportation. She added that an exit off State Road 84 was needed for the businesses to feed onto State Road 84 instead of going into the schools.

Regarding economic development, Councilmember Starkey indicated that the Town should consider moving the development of these parcels rapidly because the proposed Rapid Transit would be along Interstate 595 and the Town had been identified as the place for parking garages. She added that she was not opposed to the Rapid Transit, however; it should be identified and shared with the City of Plantation.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the proposed Rapid Transit and its effect on the environment. Councilmember Starkey indicated that if alternatives methods were not "looked at" it would adversely affect the environment.

Councilmember Starkey distributed the proposed Cost Recovery Ordinance which would be presented to Council. She advised that suggestions that were made by Councilmember Truex had not yet been incorporated into the ordinance. Councilmember Starkey indicated that she had concerns regarding two of Councilmember Truex's suggestions and these would be left for Council to debate; however, the other suggestions would be added to the ordinance. She explained the reason for the proposed cost recovery and added that during low employment, if there was a shortage of staff, the department could contract out some of the developing services.

Chair Arnold asked if Councilmember Starkey would attend the upcoming DMIA directors meeting to review the cost recovery ordinance.

Councilmember Starkey advised that the consolidation of the boards was an item on the

agenda for the upcoming Council meeting. She added that it was suggested to eliminate the Committee and she asked for the Committee's opinion. Chair Arnold indicated that he was against elimination of the Committee and indicated that the lack of concern for the business community was typical of the Town. A lengthy discussion followed with the Committee

**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STEERING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 4, 2002**

expressing the opinion that the proposed consolidation of some of the various boards/committees did not make sense.

4. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS

There were no comments and/or suggestions.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being on further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Date Approved

Chair/Committee Member